***2015-2016 IRS competition will likely resume in the fall 2015***

**Interdisciplinary Research Seed (IRS) Fund**

College of Engineering

The College of Engineering (COE) will launch an Interdisciplinary Research Seed (IRS) fund to support exploratory interdisciplinary research within the college.  The aim of this fund is to encourage collaborative activities across departments in the College and to bridge traditional disciplinary boundaries.  Expanding interdisciplinary research activities, particularly as they align with federal funding initiatives that are targeted to address pressing societal grand challenges, is becoming increasingly important to enhance research growth.   Through this seed fund, the idea is to provide the faculty with an opportunity to enable them to gather the critical “preliminary data” and establish working partnerships that may otherwise not be possible, so the team is well-positioned for larger federal (or private) grants in the future.  While the university-wide IDR fund can involve faculty across colleges, the IRS fund is specifically targeted to enhance interdisciplinary activities within the College of Engineering.

For the 2015 – 2016 academic year, the IRS announcement will come out in early Fall and will allow faculty to pursue their research over the course of 10 months.  For the 2014 – 2015 academic year, we are still in a position to grant some seed awards, but the duration of the awards this year will be shorter, from May 15 – August 30th since the funds need to be expended this fiscal year.

Specific requirements for the **COE IRS Fund**:

**Number of Departments in CoE:** Minimum of 2 faculty from 2 *different* departments in the college should propose a collaborative research idea.

**Length of proposal:** maximum 3 pages for the technical portion (not including budget justification, bios, etc.).

**Submission Deadline:** April 30th 2015.

**Amount:** $6,000 total per award for this year (duration of award is May 15 – August 30th 2015).  We anticipate awarding up to 3 IRS grants this year.  For 2015 – 2016 the amount per award will change in anticipation of a new budget.

**Submission Format:** 1 single pdf file sent via email to Professor Anupama Kaul (akaul@utep.edu) with cc to Dr. Sandra Aguirre-Covarrubias (sandraac@utep.edu), including a budget justification statement of how the funds will be expended.

**Fund Usage:**  Funds can be used to support graduate students over the summer who are involved in the research described, materials and supplies, etc.  Funds will not be allowed for travel.

**Proposal Review Process:** The proposals will be peer-reviewed.

**Review Criteria**: Proposals will be reviewed based on technical merit, the interdisciplinary extent of the research, and the likelihood of securing follow-on funding based on the research proposed.  The team should clearly identify future targeted funding opportunities (federal or private) they will seek at the end of their IRS fund.

**Decisions:** Award decisions will be made by May 13th.